

Study Guide: "Contention"

Carter Sanger, Jun-09

Introduction

Read Job 38:1-11; 40:1-14.

Has tragedy ever struck you or someone close to you? Can you think of a time when you were angry with God because things didn't seem fair or to go the way you expected?

I. Hidden assumption: God is not in complete control

Job wants to know "why?" The existence of suffering is perhaps the most common reason given for people's refusal to believe in God. The argue, "If God is really good and in control, then there wouldn't be senseless suffering. Since there is, God must not exist."

Even though God doesn't seem right in his actions, Job never abandons his faith in God. He rejects the above conclusion. Many of us reject it too. But where does that leave us? Often it leaves us unknowingly rejecting one of the premises – that God is in control.

When disaster strikes, is God behind it? When hurricane Ike came through, was that God? When 9/11 happened, where was God then?

Read Job 38:4-11.

- How complete is God's control?
- Read Psalm 77:12-19. What do you make of the Psalmists statement in 19 about God's footprints?
- Do you ever think about the existence of a good janitor? When do you notice him, when he does his job or when he doesn't? Could it be that God's control is so great that we can't see it?

II. Hidden assumption: Man's reasoning is sufficient

God's control is so great that we can trust it. We can rely on our reasoning skills to understand and even predict things. We can predict what the sky will look like at a given point in time by applying Kepler's mathematical formulas. We can predict character traits by looking at DNA. Luther even lifted man's reasoning to the level of Scripture.

- Is reason sufficient?

Read Job 38:1-4 and 40:1-2.

- What is the context of God's argument?
- According to God's questioning, what is Job missing?

III. Qualifications of Savior: The Judgment Seat

Read Job 40:8.

- When our questioning of why becomes a questioning of God, what is that the equivalent of?
- Read verses 9-13. What we must be able to do if we are to prove our rightness over God?

These verses give the qualifications for the true redeemer. He must sit on the throne of judgment. What allowed the true suffering servant to sit upon the throne of judgment and yet acquit the guilty?

Wrap-up

- How do God's words affect you? What do you take away from God's response to Job? Where is your hope?